

Mobility International USA (MIUSA)

Building an Inclusive Development Community: Technical Assistance to InterAction Member Agencies on Inclusion of People with Disabilities

USAID Cooperative Agreement Award No. GEW-A-00-01-00012-00

Performance Report October – December 2005

Project goals

To increase participation by people with disabilities, including women and girls, in US-based international development programs as participants, agents, administrators and consultants.

Accomplishments

Working closely with USAID Program Officers, MIUSA selected three Missions with which to cooperate on the project. **USAID/Albania, USAID/Ecuador, and USAID/Guatemala** were selected based on a track record of experience with inclusion, cooperating with disabled peoples' organizations (DPOs) and/or conducting outreach to people with disabilities, and on identification of a minimum of one well-established organization led by and for people with disabilities in the country. The selected Missions each responded positively to an invitation letter issued by DHCA, and after discussions to clarify project goals and activities, agreed to participate in the BIDC project.

In the ensuing weeks, MIUSA Director of Programs Cindy Lewis, working with consultant Cara Galbraith, communicated with representatives of each Mission to establish working relationships, identify stakeholders including key contractors and DPOs, and explore the status of inclusive policy, practice and plans at the Mission. During this period, MIUSA gathered background information on Mission Strategic Objectives and priorities, flagship projects, granters and contractors, and organizational structure. MIUSA sent a list of questions to each Mission soliciting information and insights on the experiences of the Mission and implementing partners of working with DPOs or including people with disabilities. Meanwhile, MIUSA continued to identify and initiate contact with USAID contractors and DPOs in each country, drawing on MIUSA's database, international networks of disability organizations and development agencies and relationships with disability leaders and development professionals, including MIUSA exchange program alumni and our partner organizations from the first phase of the BIDC project. USAID Mission staff and websites provided additional information on DPOs that have received support from USAID, directly or through involvement with USAID contractors or grantees. In conference calls and ongoing correspondence with each Mission, MIUSA clarified the goals and planned activities of the Building an Inclusive Development Community project, and began to develop a scope of work based on the priorities identified by Mission staff in each country.

Technical Assistance to USAID Missions, Contractors and DPOs

USAID/ Ecuador

Mr. Julio Mantilla, the USAID/Ecuador Mission disability coordinator, represents the Mission, including Ms. Alexandria Panehal, Mission Director, in communication with MIUSA. Mr. Mantilla was instrumental in designing the USAID e-learning course on inclusive development as well as the USAID/Ecuador Disability Policy.

USAID/Ecuador has implemented a Disability Policy that articulates a commitment to “strengthen its programming so that it is accessible to and utilized by persons with disabilities.” Future contracts and requests for proposals issued by USAID/Ecuador will include a clause on inclusion of people with disabilities. All USAID/Ecuador employees were directed to complete the USAID e-learning course on Inclusive Development in November 2005.

At least two USAID/Ecuador Strategic Objectives, addressing support for the democratic system and reducing rural and urban poverty, recognize people with disabilities as members of target populations (vulnerable or disadvantaged groups). USAID/Ecuador’s Special Development Activities Program has supported projects of Ecuadorian DPOs over the last year with small grants.

Ecuador has a strong legal framework addressing disability rights, however, few legal protections have been implemented. A number of NGOs are seeking to address implementation of the law, particularly in the area of education. Other steps forward include accessibility improvements in the public transportation system in some areas of Quito. There is a national federation of disability organizations in Ecuador that maintains a listing of DPOs.

USAID/Ecuador identified training to contractors and implementing partners as a priority focus for MIUSA’s technical assistance. Specifically, contractors and grantees need training and information on the USAID Disability Policy and new directives on inclusion issued by USAID and by USAID/Ecuador, as well as practical training and opportunities for networking to facilitate inclusion of people with disabilities in USAID sponsored projects. Inclusion of people with disabilities in Ecuadorian national elections in October 2006 is also under consideration as a Mission priority for MIUSA’s technical assistance.

Mr. Mantilla has requested to make the USAID e-learning course on inclusive development available to USAID contractors/grantees, in conjunction with MIUSA’s technical assistance and training. MIUSA will provide follow-on technical assistance and training to Mission staff and team leaders, following completion of the e-learning course. MIUSA will also work with USAID/Ecuador to extend technical assistance to key DPOs, to expand the capacity of people with disabilities to participate in USAID sponsored development efforts.

USAID/Albania

Ms. Suzana Cullufi has been MIUSA's primary contact at USAID/Albania. USAID/Albania does not currently have a Disability Policy, and has not yet implemented the USAID e-learning course on inclusive development.

USAID/Albania has provided support for people with disabilities through a relationship with the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF). The ADRF is a national organization, with the mission of promoting the human rights of people with disabilities in Albania. ADRF coordinates an information network of approximately 12 Albanian DPOs, and implements a national disability strategy, with projects that addresses inclusion of people with disabilities in the electoral process and access to education and employment. USAID/Albania cites ADRF as having been instrumental in the successful efforts to develop Albania's national disability rights legislation, which was enacted in 2005. In 2005, USAID/Albania awarded a three-year grant to ADRF to continue to supply wheelchairs to Albanians and to support ADRF's advocacy work.

USAID/Albania has identified capacity building to DPOs, with ADRF as a focal point, as a priority for MIUSA's technical assistance. Ms. Cullufi suggested that Albanian DPOs need leadership training and organizational capacity building. Ms. Blerta Cani, director of ADRF, articulated a specific need identified by ADRF for capacity building to effectively promote inclusion of people with disabilities in development. MIUSA will also work with USAID/Albania to extend technical assistance to Mission staff and contractors, for inclusion of people with disabilities in USAID sponsored development efforts.

USAID/Guatemala

MIUSA's primary contacts at USAID/Guatemala are Ms. Lisa Magno (Health/Education Program Office) and Ms. Liliana Gil (EGAT-Program office). USAID/Guatemala does not have a Disability Policy in place, and Mission staff members have not taken the USAID e-learning course on Inclusive Development.

USAID/Guatemala's experience with people with disabilities includes a USAID sponsored initiative with the Kennedy Foundation in 2005, in which curriculum and training materials for teachers of children with disabilities were translated into Spanish and provided to educators in Guatemala. USAID/Guatemala is familiar with Fundación Artes Muy Especiales, a DPO that is receiving business plan training from Technoserve, a USAID grantee. USAID is also aware of an NGO that has provided small grants to family members of people with disabilities, and a DPO that coordinates a rehabilitation and independent living project. An organization of parents and teachers operating a rural area school for children with disabilities is a member of an NGO network that is supported by USAID through a capacity-building initiative implemented by Mercy Corps (who is one of MIUSA's partner organizations on the BIDC project.)

The Government of Guatemala declared 2005 as the Year of the Disabled, and established a Commission involving the Ministries of Infrastructure, Health, and Education and others. The Commission issued a national action plan and a list of commitments for improved inclusion and services for people with disabilities in areas including education, health, culture and sports, labor

and social welfare, and improved access in infrastructure, communications, housing and public areas.

USAID/Guatemala has identified development of standards in education and teacher training for students with disabilities as a priority for MIUSA's technical assistance. Standards on inclusive and specialized education would be developed as a subset of standards for basic education, a project currently under development by a USAID-funded work team, at the request of the Guatemalan Ministry on Education. MIUSA will also work with key DPOs to build the capacity of community members with disabilities to participate in the design and implementation of education policy and teacher training for students with disabilities, as well as other development initiatives. In addition, MIUSA will work with USAID/Guatemala to provide technical assistance to all Strategic Objective teams, contractors and grantees, to promote inclusion of people with disabilities throughout the range of USAID-sponsored development programs in Guatemala.

Support for Innovative Projects (Small Grants)

This quarter, MIUSA began to draft protocol, guidelines and procedures for implementing a "Community Partnerships" small grants program, in which disabled peoples' organizations would be invited to submit proposals for projects to promote inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in development activities.

Technical Assistance Materials and Information

Publication of *Moving toward Inclusion*, featuring outcomes and lessons learned from the earlier phase of the BIDC project and the project evaluation report are in the final pre-publication stage and will be disseminated in the next quarter.

MIUSA continued to expand and update our extensive international database, which references disability organizations, alumni, trainers and development and other resource organizations. MIUSA continued to receive inquiries and requests regarding inclusive development from DPOs and other NGOs, the majority from outside the U.S. When appropriate, MIUSA solicited more detailed information about disability or development organizations, to be added to the MIUSA database, or to pursue as a possible "best practice" example.

Activities planned for next quarter

Technical assistance: Develop a scope of work for each country. Plan and prepare for initial technical assistance field visits to each country. Conduct a field trip to a minimum of one country.

Small grants: Establish protocol, guidelines, criteria and timeline for administration of small grants. Establish external review committee. Announce small grants in one country.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Develop benchmarks and impact indicators and submit for CTO approval.

Dissemination: draft timeline for participation in meetings with USAID personnel and other professional meetings.

Conclusion

We look forward to continuing to work closely with USAID to plan and implement intensive technical assistance to USAID Missions, USAID grantee organizations and contractors, and disabled peoples' organizations in selected countries. Thank you once again to USAID for support and cooperation to make this important work possible.